

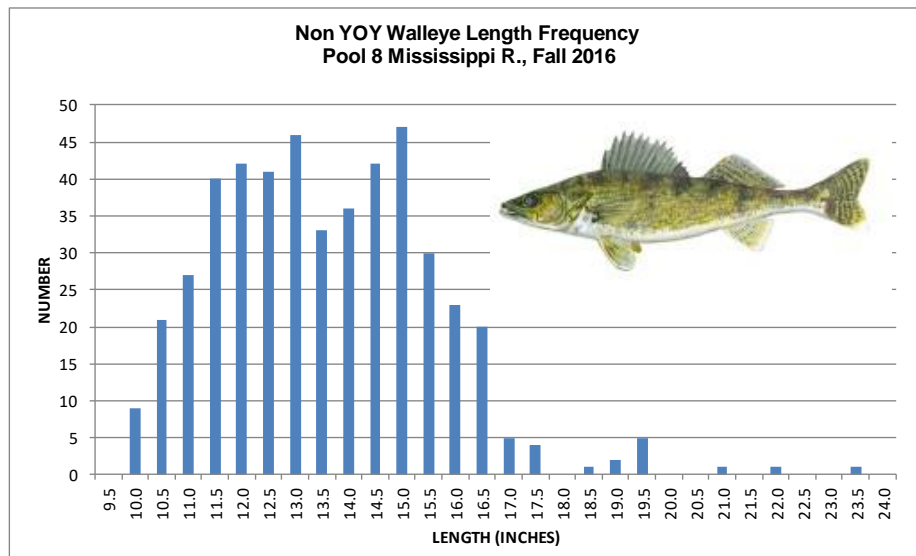


# **WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FISHERIES INFORMATION SHEET. POOL 8, MISSISSIPPI RIVER WALLEYE AND SAUGER.**

**RIVER:** MISSISSIPPI RIVER, POOL 8

**COUNTY:** LA CROSSE

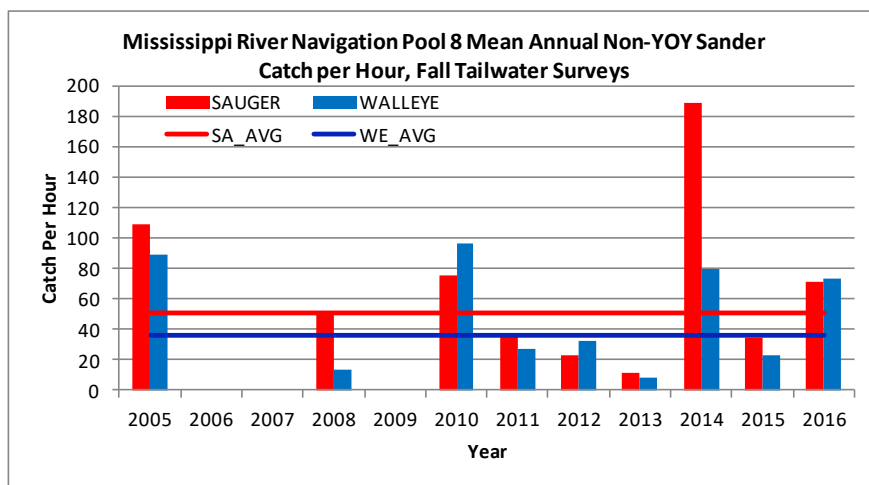
**YEAR:** 2016



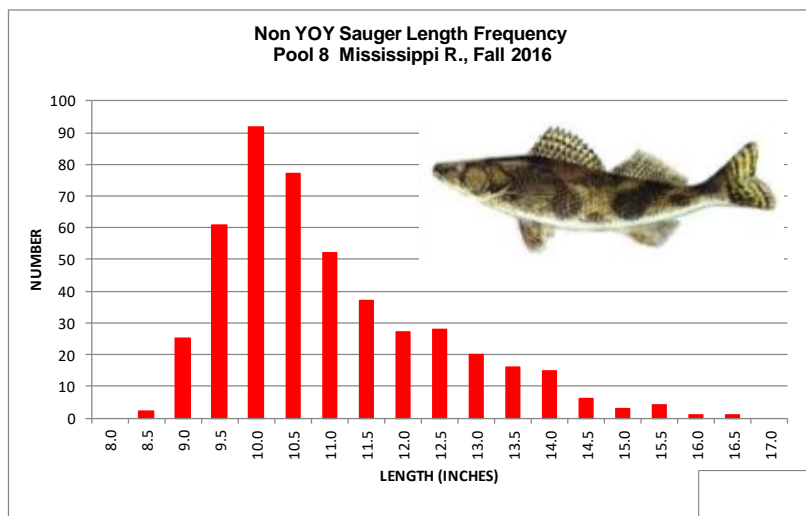
The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources surveyed Pool 8 of the Mississippi River in La Crosse County to determine the health of the walleye and sauger fishery. Over a three day period in October, a DNR crew collected a total of 477 non young-of-the-year (non YOY) walleye and 427 sauger by electrofishing at night in near-shore areas and wingdams in the tailwater of Pool 8. In our sample, non YOY walleye were between 9.8 to 23.3 inches in length. Catch-per-unit-effort was 73 walleye per hour.

Since 2005, abundance of non YOY walleye, as measured by our catch-per-unit-effort, has remained about the same. Although annual abundance estimates varied from 8 to 96 walleye per hour, we saw no trend, either increasing or decreasing, from our samples.

Since 1983, average yearly size of non YOY walleye has varied from 11.8 to 16.7 inches. These fluctuations may be due to varying abundances of annual age classes. We found no long term trend in annual sizes suggesting that fish size has remained about the same for the last 34 years. Our sampling efforts in Pool 8 currently indicate a healthy and self-sustaining walleye population.



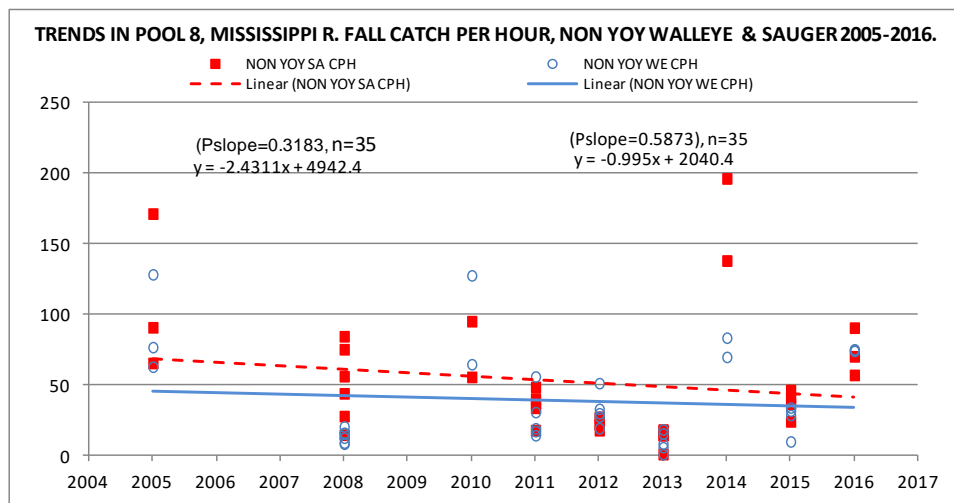
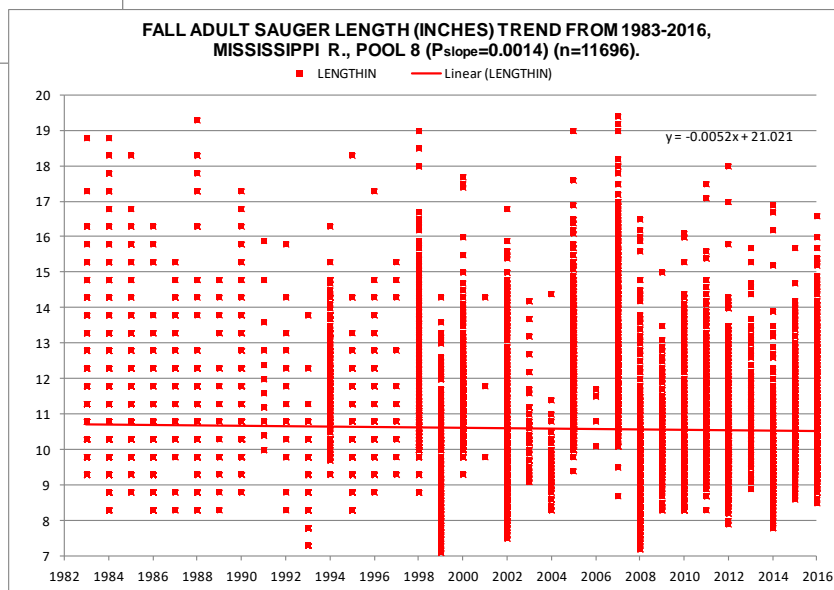
A total of 467 sauger were collected during this fall's survey. Non YOY sauger were between 8.5 to 16.6 inches. Catch-per-unit-effort was 71 sauger per hour. Since 2005, abundance of non YOY sauger has not significantly changed and there was no statistical trend in abundance.



Since 1983, average yearly size of non YOY sauger has varied from 8.3 to 12 inches. These fluctuations may be due to varying abundances of annual age classes growing into or leaving the non YOY population. We found a decreasing trend in annual sizes of non YOY suggesting smaller fish in recent years. Since 1983, there has been a 0.2 inch reduction. Since 1994, average size has decreased 0.5 inches.

Long term reduction in size, suggests that we should continue monitoring the sauger population

in Pool 8. In Pool 9, downstream of Pool 8, there was a decline in sauger and walleye (size from 1999-2016 (both declined 1.7 inches) but not in abundance from 2003-2016. Unlike walleye, there is no minimum size limit on sauger for the Mississippi River bordering Wisconsin. Presently, the bag limit of these two fishes is 6 fish in aggregate and the walleye minimum size limit is 15 inches.



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